

A Looking-Glaſſ

Discovering to all People what

I M A G E

they BE A R. *250*

By which the True Jew is known from the false, and the Christian in nature, from him that is so in name only.

Likewise all people in some measure may know what spirit they are of; and whether they are the Children of God, or of the Devil.

With directions for such as live in Error, how they may leave their Error, and know the Truth which leads out of Error, by which People are made free from sin, which they run into, and live in, by following the spirit of Error.

With a few words to Informers, who make it their work to Inform against their Neighbours, for meeting together peaceably in the fear of the Lord, to Worship him, as be requires.

By a Follower of him, who saith, *if you continue in my Word, then are you my Disciples indeed, And ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free, John 8. 31, 32.*

Edward Bourne.

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1557. *Utrumque sacerdotio, quod lo. 2. nullum est.*

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A Looking-Glaſſ

FOR
All People to ſeo Themselves, whether
they be what they ought to be, and do
as they ought to do, or otherwise.

ALTHOUGH much hath been Written, and Spoken, to turn Peoples minds; to the *Lights of Christ* in them; to the end that all may do what they ought, in all things, and be what they ought towards God; yet but few have received the Report thereof, though by obeying this *Lights*, which is that which leads to keep a Conscience void of offence towards God and Men, true happiness is attained unto; and contrariwise the neglect hereof, is the cause of Peoples ruin, and Eternal Milery. But notwithstanding, whether People will bear or forbear, I know none on whom ſuch a Work as this is laid, by the Lord God, can neglect the fame, but we muſt be Transgrefſors our ſelves in this respect. And therefore to keep my Conscience pure towards God, I thus protest.

You that live in Sin, you know you ſhould not live ſo, and that which gives you this knowledg, is the Grace of God, which hath appeared unto you, by which, as in a Glaſſ, you may ſee your ſelves; by which the Drunkard, ſee he ſhould not be Drunk; and the Lyer, he ſhould not lie; and the Envious Man, he ſhould not live in Envy; and he that Perſecutes his Neighbour, whose Works are better then his, and

(44)

for that cause, all these are doing what they should not do, as they themselves (many of them) in their Prayers to God do confess. And these, though they do that which they know they should not do, and leave undone, that which they know they should not leave undone, yet would they have the Lord to have Mercy on them; although their daily practice is, thus to Transgress. They acknowledge they have Transgressed against Gods Holy Law, and too much followed the Devices and desires of their own hearts, &c. And this is their manner from the beginning of the year, to the end thereof: But (Mark) you that are such, can you believe that God will shew Mercy to you, ~~only~~ on this your Confession? Are you so foolish, and unwise, as so to believe? If you do, certainly you will find it otherwise in the end: Then your folly will appear, though at the present you may account your selves wise, and understanding, and them foolish who are truly wise: But I must tell you, to be truly wise, is to fear the Lord, and to keep his Commandments, though you may not account it so.

Object. But some may say, When are the Commandments, of God that we are to keep?

Ans^r. These. Thou shalt love the Lord God with all thy heart, and thy Neighbour as thy self, and whatsoever thou seest by the grace of God that hath appeared to thee, thou oughtest to do it, and it will be thy Transgression to neglect the same; therefore do not deceive your selves with such a perswasion any longer, if you do you will shew much folly, and indiscretion therein, for God will not be mocked with such lip Service. This I am bold in the fear of God to assure you of, you may draw near him with your Lips, but your Hearts are far from him, whilst it is openly thus; You must not only confess your faults to God, but must also forsake them, if Mercy with him you would find: And this is the Word of God unto you. Let the Wicked Man forsake his way, and the unrighteous Man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly Pardon him, Isa. 55.7.

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You pray that God would deliver you from all Envy, and Malice, and from all uncharitableness, and from all the works of the Devil: But if you were delivered from all these abominations, happy would you be; then God who delivereth his People from all these would be your God. But your Teachers many of them are Envious themselves; and uncharitable themselves, &c. Therefore it may be you are the more imboldened to commit all these Abominations: But if you, and your Teachers, would take heed to the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, that thereby you may be guided, you would know the Lord God to be your Teacher, who teacheth his People to profit; and so be delivered from all these Abominations, and all the works of the Devil, and then we should not suffer by you as we do; for the Truth being your Guide, and Teacher, you will give us the same liberty to Worship God, that you would have your selves, and so do as you would be done by in this, and in all things; and so hereby you will do what you ought to do, and be what you ought to be towards God; and not before, viz. you cannot do, nor be, in you ought till you be guided by the Truth, which leads to meekness, and lowliness, by which God will direct you in all your wayes; then shall you be far from oppression, and violence, and spoil will be (as it may be said) banished from your Habitations, that spirit which leads to unrighteousness not being harkened unto, but the Voice of the Lord God obeyed, and his Counsel stood in.

Object. But some may say, you direct us to the Light within, that by taking heed unto it, we may forsake that which God requires us to forsake, and do what we ought to do, that so we may be what we ought to be towards him. You also will acknowledge that that which moves to unrighteousness, and unholiness, is within; And seeing that it is so, that both these are within, how shall they be known, and distinguished the one, from the other? How shall that be rejected and forsaken, that ought so to be? And that followed and obeyed, that ought to be followed and obeyed? Especially because that Principle which

which leads to unrighteousness, sometimes appears like that which moves unto Righteousness. How then are differences between the one, and the other, and follow that which we ought to follow, and avoid the contrary, in such a difficult case as this? &c.

Answe. 'Tis true, that both these are within, The heart of Man is deceitful, and desperately wicked, &c. as the Scriptures testify: But the Lord by his Light in the heart discovers this to his Creature which he hath made, and is the Work of his Hands, and by it he being therein hearkened unto, and obeyed, helps the Creature from running into the Snare which the Enemy of the Soul would (by enticing) draw him into, and so though there is that *within People* that would intice, and lead them into Sin, yet is there also that *within* which shews the Creature the Evil thereof, and doth discover from whence it doth proceed, and being harkened unto, as it ought, and obeyed, doth preserve the Creature thereby out of Temptations; and so hereby God doth deliver his Creature (Man) whom he hath formed, out of the Snares of the Devil, who goeth about like a roaring *Lion*, seeking whom he may devour: And though he doth appear like an *Angel of Light*, as he is mentioned in 2 Cor. 11. 14. yet by the True *Light* he is discovered, which *Light* leadeth to fear the Lord, and do his will, and his snare are avoided, that *Light* and Truth being followed, and obeyed, which makes a discovery of him; and so hereby the Lord preserves his Creature, which he hath made by his own mighty Power, to his own Praise, and the Creatures joy and Comfort. Glory be given to God on high forever.

And so it is by a diligent taking heed to that which is *pure of God* within, that this comes to be known, and witnessed, and it is by this the Soul comes to live, which was dead; hereby the quickening Power of God is known, which quickens, and makes alive to him, they who are dead to him by reason of their *Flesh-paies*, and *Sins*, by inclining their Ears, and hearkening diligently to that which is *pure of God in themselves*, that they may be guided *surely only*; and so hereby such are led to repent, and Sin no more; and so becomes Followers of Christ, who said to the Woman taken

is Adultery, Sin no more, Am. And so the blessed state comes to be known, which is without Sin, &c.

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Objection. *One* *some* *may* *say* *this* *is* *strange* *Doctrine*, *if* *we* *mean* *a* *State* *without* *Sin* *in* *this* *World*; *what* *can* *People* *be* *freed* *from* *their* *Sins*, *while* *they* *be* *on* *this* *side* *the* *Grave*? *do* *not* *tell* *us* *so*, *our* *Teachers* *have* *told* *us*, *that* *such* *a* *State* *is* *not* *to* *be* *expected* *while* *we* *are* *in* *this* *World*? *Tis* *true* *we* *ought* *not* *to* *Sin* *but* *to* *strive* *against* *it*, *but* *we* *shall* *never* *be* *delivered* *from* *it* *while* *we* *are* *here*; *is* *it* *erronious* *thus* *to* *hold*, &c.

Ans. If People do not know a freedom from Sin here in this World: Where then? What ground is there for them to believe That they shall attain to such a state hereafter? Seeing it is said there is no Repentance in the Grave; and as Death leaves, Judgment finds; and no unclean thing can enter the Kingdom of God; If People must not be cleansed here, I would know where they shall? 'Tis gross to hold that there is a *Purgatory* after Death for Peoples Soules to depart into, when they shall leave this World, where their Sins shall be purged away; and if there be no such Place, as I suppose you will not grant there is (except you are Popishly affected), then let not such plead for a never being made free from Sin while they are here; if ye do well consider it, will it not be best for you to grant that there is a *Purgatory*, where sin is to be purged away afterwards, if you would live in Sin Term of Life? But Sin is to be Purged away here, you must know Christ to free you from your Sins while you are here, else Wo will be to you, if you put it off till hereafter.

Christ came to save his people from their Sin, and to destroy the works of the Devil, which is Sin: And *Mas. 1. 21.* who doth not know this Work wrought in them by Christ, they cannot so properly call him their Saviour; For how is he a Saviour to such who are not saved by him, from their Sins? Christ taught Perfection here; the Apostles and Saints knew a being made free from Sin, while they were in this World; and their Labour, and Work, was that they might present every Man Perfect in Christ Jesus. See *Act. 5. 48.* *Rim. 6. 15.* *Cil. 1. 28.*

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Therefore such as Teach and hold otherwise are contrary to Christ, and contrary to his Ministers, then judge whose Ministers they be, for the Ministers of Christ they cannot be said to be ; who teach contrary to him ; and therefore are they to be turned away from, and not to be believed.

So while that Spirit Rules in the Heart, which leads to Sin, there is not room for Truth, but Sin is lived in, the Spirit of Truth not being obeyed, which frees from Sin ; and so while it is thus, such cannot be said to be the Servants of Righteousness, see Rom. 6. 20. And so while People follow such, they give their Money for that which is not Bread ; and their Labour for that which satisfieth not, see Isa. 55. 2. Therefore turn your minds to the Light of Christ in you, that you may know the Lord to be your Teacher ; who teacheth his People to profit ; so will you be taught of him, and in Righteousness will you be established ; so hereby you will know him your Teacher, who saith, Whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely, see Revel. 22. 17.

So here I give you a mark, whereby you shall know the Ministers of Christ, from others, the Ministers of Christ they gave freely as they have freely received, according to the Commandment of Christ, Mat. 10. 8. The Ministers of Antichrist preach for Hire, and filthy lucre, and seek for their gain from their Quarters, like the false Prophets, and like those mentioned in the Scriptures, prepare war against them that puts not into their Mouthes. Mat. 3. 5. And whether *William Ley*, Priest of *Nicoblaſſ Parish* in *Worceſter*, did not like them, for his *Belly*, on the account of his *Easter* re-bonings (as he calls it) *Cast* into, and *Key* *Roberts Smith*, and *Edward Bourne* of that Parish in *Prifon* ; And would not make it appear to them it was his Right, according to the *Law of God* ; which he ought to have done ; weigh these things with the Truth in your selves, which weighs and measures things aright, and give judgment herein accordingly : The Ballance of the *Saints* hereby you will know, which weighs things aright ; here you will know that within, which the outward was a Figure of ; and consider whether they be the Ministers of Christ, that love to be called *Master*, and love *Salutations in the Markets*, and *the Chiefeſt Places in the Assemblies*, and the uppermost *Rooms at Feasts*, seeing Christ forbiddit, and cryed wo to such ; and

and whether such as these do not run and the Lord never sent them; who are so contrary to the Ministers of Righteousness? They would have money for Bread, and Wine, at *Kasher* (so called) which they call the *Sacrament*, although the People never receive it: But whether it be Equal and Just in them to desire Money from People for nought? Let they that shall read this consider; did not the Apostle and Servant of the Lord say, That they did not eat any Mans Bread for nought; And they would not make the Gospel chargable, &c. I would know wherein these are followers of those who would have others to follow them, as they followed Christ: For my part I do not know wherein in one particular; But they may be said to be followers of them who were contrary to Christ Jesus in many particulars: They take and give that which they call the *Lords Supper before and after Dinner*; and so do contrary to the Institution therein; For Christ took the *Cup after Supper* and *Blessed it*, and *gave to his Disciples*, as you may see, *Luke 22. 20*. And though we cannot touch, nor taste, nor handle with them, in those things which are to perish in the using, after the Doctrines and Traditions of Men; yet the *Supper of the Lord* we own, and do witness the Substance of what was figured forth thereby, Glory be given to him who is Holy, and lives for evermore.

These and their followers who are taught by them say, 'tis true we ought not to Sin; but to strive against it: But we shall never be delivered from Sin, while we are in this Life, &c. Now what hope is there for People to overcome the Enemy of their Souls, if the case stands thus? If They do not follow such Teachers, they can be but the Devils Captives; and if they do so, they must so continue it seems; For he that lives in Sin serves the Devil, and so is his Captive; Nor so they must continue it seems, while they be here, and that is so long as they can be followed; then sure they cannot be the Servants of Righteousness, whilst they obey the spirit of Unrighteousness.

The promise of that life that is Eternal is to him that overcomes, and not to him that doth not. He that is made a Conqueror, and ~~overcomes~~ through Christ, he overcomes: But how will any prevail while they follow such as say it can never be in this Life? Was it not in this Life the Apostles were made more then Conquerours through Christ? This I would know, see *Rom. 8. 37*.

You that follow such Teachers, did not your god-fathers, and god-mothers (so called) promise, and vow, for you in Baptism, that when you came to Age, you should forsake the Devil, and all his Works, &c? And what do your Teachers tell you now the contrary? saying; It can never be in this Life, but you must always live in Sin till you come to your Graves. Now Sin is the Work of the Devil, and if People must always, when they be here, live in Sin; then, How can it be said, it being so, that they have forsaken the Devil and all his Works? Consider what confusion is here; and be awaked unto Righteousness, that fruit may be brought forth by you unto God, who will not be mocked with your Lip-service, in calling Christ Lord, and yet doing contrary to what the Commandments who said to his Disciples, Be Perfect as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect: So to draw near to God with your Lips will not serve you man, or make you acceptable unto him: But you must draw near with your Hearts also, and do well, and as you ought, or else all your good sayings will be in vain, and to no purpose. The Apostle James said, So say, and So do, see Jam. 2. 12. And Christ saith, Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: But he that doth the will of my Father, &c. Therefore say to it, you that shall come to read these lines. I charge you in the presence of the Lord, that you be found doing his Holy Will, that you may bring forth fruit unto him; lest he cut you down as unprofitable Trees, and cast ye into the fire.

So these things before mentioned being considered, it will appear that it is not erroneous to hold, that a freedom from Sin is to be attained unto here in this Life; but that it is erroneous, and devilish, to Teach, and Hold, the contrary: And if it be erroneous to hold that we should live without Sin, then it was erroneous in our god-fathers, and god-mothers, (so called) to promise, and vow, in our behalves, that when we came to Age, we should forsake the Devil, and all his Works, &c. Which if we do, certainly we must cease from Sin, and not live any longer therein; for while Sin is lived in, the Devil and all his Works cannot be said to be forsaken; because Sin is the Work of the Devil, which Christ came to destroy; and so it is those who can truly and properly call Christ their Saviour, who witnesseth that he hath saved them from their Sins, which was the cause of the wrath, and displeasure of the Almighty; so the true

true Followers of Christ, the true Disciples of Christ, they know and can declare it to the praise and honour of the most high God, that it is Jesus who hath saved them from the wrath to come, see 1 Thes. 1. 10.

So who would be, as they ought to be, and do as they ought to do, must abstain from every thing, which the holy Light of Christ in them makes appear in them to be evil, and follow this good and holy Light only, that by it they may be led into all truth, by which the God of truth is known, and come to, which who comes to, must believe that God is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him, and they who do refuse to be guided by the Light of Jesus Christ in them, which is that which God hath appointed all People to be guided by; it is them that do otherwise then they ought to do, and be not what God requires them to be, such were those the Apostle James spake of, forgetful hearers of the Word, who neglected to do it, whom he 1. 23, compared to a natural man, who beholds his face in a 24, Glass, and straitway forgets what manner of man he is; so what is the difference between such as refuse to hear the voice of truth, that they may do it, and those who are forgetful hearers, who are negligent in doing according to the Word, that they have heard: this I shall leave to such as shall read these lines, to give righteous judgment therein.

Now it is to be confidered, what it is to be a
True Jew.

Abraham was a true Jew, and all his posterity, they were and are called Jews; but all were not true Jews, nor are so, who came of the loins of Abraham, but those who were, and are, guided by the Spirit of Truth, as Abraham was, such are the Children of the Promise, who are accounted for the seed of Abraham, Abraham kept the commandments of the Lord, and they are the

true Jewes, who do like *Abraham* herein ; the Lord said of him, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon *Abraham*, that which he hath spoken of him, see Gen. 18. 19. he said they shall keep the Way of the Lord, &c. Now what is it to keep the Way of the Lord, but to be led and guided by the Spirit of the Lord, as *Abraham* was ? and they who are led by this ; 'Tis they I do affirm to be the true Jewes, and not others, viz. Not such as walk contrary to it, and do rebel against it ; the Apostle said, He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly; neither is that Circumcision, that is outward in the flesh ; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly and Circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God, Rom. 2. 28, 29. Now they who are led by the Spirit of God, at this time, as *Abraham* was led by the Spirit of God then, to the Circumcision that was outward in the flesh, so are such now led to the Circumcision within, of which the outward was a Figure ; So that which God requires of People, is that they do as he makes manifest unto them, they ought by the measure of his own Spirit, which he have given them to profit withall, and leads them unto, by his Spirit ; Now if they do what the Servants of God did, as is Recorded in the Scriptures, if they be not led thereunto, as they were by his holy Spirit ; he may say unto them who hath required this at your hands ? This is the Comforter which Christ said to his Disciples he would send, which should lead them into all truth ; and blessed are they who do walk according to this Rule, viz. Who are led and guided, by the holy Spirit of the Lord God in what they do, and not they who do gainsay and resist it : See what became of *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Cirah*'s Company, who gainsaid this holy Spirit ; they were swallowed up of the Earth : *Moses* who was guided by the Spirit of the Lord God, prayed the Children of *Israel* to depart from the Tents of those wicked Men, and to touch nothing that was theirs, lest they should be consumed in all their Sins.

Now let they who shall read these lines consider, whether there be not too great a Multitude, that do resist this holy Spirit now, not regarding how God did punish such before, though these things

were written for their admonition, there are too many whose *is* are like *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, whom God overthrew: And though this sore judgment was written, with many more, that beset the disobedient, and rebellious, that they who should come after them, should not do as they did; yet what small regard do they take of the same? Well, though the Lord God be slow to wrath, and of great kindness, and do suffer long, and bear long; yet his long-suffering will come to an end, and his great kindness will come to an end with such, if they do not turn to him, and amend their wayes, and their doings while his Spirit strives with them, when that ceaseth to strive with them, and the things that belongs to their peace comes to be hid from their Eyes; then they may wish they had never been born, when their misery comes upon them; this was the state of the miserable *Jewes* after God had long strove with them, over whom Christ took up a lamentation; see and seriously consider, *Mat. 23.37*. And do not deceive, your selves by persuading your selves it shall go well with you, though you follow your sinful Lusts, and Pleasures, and the imaginations of your own foolish Hearts; do you think, you whose Mouthes are full of Cutting, and Swearing, and Bitternes, and live in Drunkenness, and Whoredom, and are Envious, and Persecutors of the Righteous and Just, that *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, whom the Earth swallowed up, and the *Sodomites*; whom God overthrew, were greater Sinners; I tell you nay, but except you repent, you shall, as Christ said likewise Perish.

* *Object.* But some may say, Are there any now, that we are to depart from their Tents? And to touch nothing of theirs, lest we be consumed in all their Sins; if there be, Who are they? or What be they? That we may beware of them.

Answ. There are such now, whose *Tents* are to be departed from, or dwellings: They are those, who have sold themselves to do wickedly, whose life is in Sin, and do make it a sport to transgress against the Lord, by breaking his holy and Righteous Laws, who serve other gods then the Lord God, who made the World, and all things therein, contrary to his holy Command; who follow after Covetousness, contrary to his holy Command, who are

Murderers, Adulterers, and Swearers; contrary to his holy Commandments, and are Hazers of that which is good, and Persecutors of the Righteous, contrary to his holy will and appointment, and do not as they would be done unto, and so are contrary to Christ, who gave this Commandment: Now such as are found in these things, and do live in these things, and in whatsoever by the *Lights* of Christ in them, they see to be evil, it is they whose *Temples* are to be departed from, and nothing of their's is to be touched; none of their Sins must People love to live in, lest they be consumed in the same: Therefore be warned in the fear of the Lord to depart from such, and touch nothing that is their's, do not Sin like them in any of these things, lest you be consumed therein; So to be a true Jew, is to be guided by the Spirit of Truth, as was Abraham the Jew, the Father of the Faithfull.

And now let it be consider'd, what it is to be a
True Christian.

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IT is said in the holy Scriptures, that all are not *Israel*, that are called *Israel*. So I say, though there are many that are called *Christians*, yet there are none of these true *Christians*, but who are guided by the Spirit of Christ Jesus, who said Learn of me, for I am meek, and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your souls. So then who are guided by the Spirit of Christ, which leads to meekness, and lowliness of heart, that are the true *Christians*; and not those who are biting, and devouring on another, who live in Pride, and High-mindedness; Nor those who are fighting one with the other, and Slaying one another, and Persecuting one another about Religion, and Church Worship; these are not the true *Christians*; these are guided by *Cain's* Spirit who slew his righteous Brother *Abel*, because his Brothers Works were better than his; These have the Name, but are one of the Nature: They want

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the Nature of true Christians, and so are like them who said, They were *swayt*: But did lye, See *Krol. 3. 9.*

The true Christians are guided by Christ's Spirit, which leads them to love one another, and their Enemies also; and to bless such as curse them, and not to overcome evil with the same, but to overcome it with that which is of a contrary Nature to it; namely, that which is good; and not to swear at all, but to speake the truth (without swearing) in obedience to Christ Jesus, who saith Swear not at all, but their Yea is Yea, and their Nay is Nay, without an Oath, as Christ teacheth, so they are such, as bear his sayings, and do them, and so differ greatly from them, who call Christ Lord, and yet do not the things which he saith, and so the true Christians are subject to Christ Jesus in doing whatsoever he commands them, the Spirit of Christ is that which they be led and guided by, that holy Spirit which calls to follow peace, and holines with all men, without which no man shall see the Lord, though he be called by the best name, and do profess never so much of Christianity. Thus, in short, I have shewed what it is to be a true Christian.

Object. But it is commonly objected, that things can never be well in Church, or State, while People who are contrary the one to the other in their Worship, may have liberty to Worship God in their particular manners, every particular sort of People, viz.: The Papists, The Episcopal men, Those called Baptists, and those called Quakers, &c. Which may all have liberty to follow that which they think best, This cannot do well, say They: We shall never do well, until all are brought to one Uniformity in their Worship, &c.

Ans. Can you do better herein, then the Apostle and Servant of Christ Jesus counselleth in such Cases as these? Who said, Let every Man be fully persuaded in his own Mind in what he doth; For whatsoever is not of Faith is Sin, Now as the Papist would have liberty to Worship God in that Way which he judges best, so the same liberty he would have, must he give to another. The Epis-

Episcopal Men must do the same, and so the rest: And lay aside all Forcing, and Compelling, and Persecuting about these things, and who are in the right Way, let them make it appear by their Meekness, and Gentleness, and Patience, &c. And so let them by their sound Doctrine, and good Conversation, convince them that are contrary minded if they can; so long as all these are peaceable, and do nothing that tends to the disturbance of the Common Wealth, nor to the injury of any Person, but do only Worship God as they judge they ought: What shall Men take on them to judge in such cases, and to Punish in such cases, if such err in their Worship, seeing it belongs to God to judge, and Punish for the same? Now if Men take this upon them, do not they do what they ought not; seeing the thing belongs to God, and not to Man to do thus? If any err herein, they ought to be admonished, that they may desist from their error, and close which the Truth, by which they see their error. Christ said who is to be heard in all things, If thy Brother offend tell him between him and thee, if he hears thee thou hast gaignd thy Brother; see Mat. 18. 15, 16, 17. if he do not hear, take one or two more with thee; if he do not hear them, then tell the Church; if he do not hear the Church, then let him be as the *Heathen*, or the *Publican*; he doth not say, Persecute him, Burn him for a Heretick, but let him be as the *Heathen*, or the *Publican*.

Further, Christ speaking of false Prophets, said, Believe them not; But did not bid his Followers to Persecute, and Destroy them. And further, consider Christ's Parable concerning the Tares, which the Enemy sowed while Men slept, and what the Houholder said to his Servant thereupon that informed him of the same, see Mat. 13. 24, 25, 26, 27, 18, 29, 30. Which plainly shewys, that such should be left to God, who err in point of Religion, and Church Worship, to be judged by him for the same, who is the judge of all the Earth, and will do right.

So let all have liberty to Worship God as they are persuaded in their own Minds they ought, and not be barred therefrom, so long as they be peaceable, and do nothing that tends to the disturbance of the Common Wealth, or injury of any Person, viz. Whilst these things cannot be justly charged upon them; and this is Gospel liberty,

liberty ; and till this be given, viz. Liberty of Conscience in things relating to the Worship of God, it cannot be well, in Church nor state. Now if any err herein not willingly, but do it because they judge they ought, and are sincere herein towards God, doubtless God will when he sees it best for such, discover their error to them, and lead them therefrom, and guide them in the right Way by his own Spirit, which doth not, nor cannot erre ; so here is no liberty desired for People to live in drunkennes, or in stealing from any, or to offer violence to any Person, &c. if any do after this manner, let them be restrained, and punished, as God by his holy Laws has appointed, which answers that of God in all Peoples Consciences.

Here is shewed, how People may know what spirit they are of ; whether they be the Children of the Most High God, or the Children of the Devil, &c.

THIS must be by what is brought forth by them, for by the Fruit is the Tree to be known, whether it be good, or otherwise ; For a good Tree, saith Christ, Bringeth forth good Fruit, But an evil Tree evil Fruit, &c. So by what is brought forth may it be known, or judged, of what spirit People are, or by what spirit they are led, and guided. Now the Children of God are led by his Spirit ; also the Children of the Devil, are led by the spirit of the Devil. The fruits of the Spirit of the Lord are these, viz. Love, Joy, Peace, Gentleness, Goodness, Gal. 5.22, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, &c. And the fruits of Gal. 5.23. the spirit of the Devil, or the Works of the flesh are these, viz. swearing upon any occasion whatsoever, when People know by that of God in their Consciences they should not swear at all ; Drunkenness, Lying, Fornication, C Envy

Envy, Malice, Persecution, Fraud, Dissimulation, (Idolatry) or
 any thing else that a Man may set up in his Mind, and love more
 then the Truth; whether it be Covetousness, or whatsoever it
 be; for all these are Idolatry, and all these are evil fruits: So
 who are in these things, they cannot be said to please God, nor to
 be of God, who is the Author of all good; in this said John, The
 Children of God are manifested, and the Children of the Devil;
 whosoever is born of God doth not commit Sin, &c. And further,
 he saith, Whosoever doth not Righteousness is not of God, see
 1 John 3. 9, 10. &c. Christ, said to the Jews, who were doing the
 Works of the Devil, (when they said God was their Father) said
 he, If God was your Father you would love me; because I
 proceeded and came forth from him; but said he, You are of your
 Father the Devil, and his Works you will do, who was a Lyer,
 and a Murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth,
 &c. These were Betrayers, and Murderers of the Just, and holy
 One, and yet took on them to be the Children of God, calling
 him their Father, but made it appear that the Devil was their
 Father, by doing the Works of the Devil, which was to murder,
 and betray the Righteous; and these said, that Abraham was their
 Father, but were far from his Works: So like them, many that
 are called Christians, that have the name, but are out of the na-
 ture of true Christians, they oppress the Righteous, and per-
 secute the Righteous, who are the true followers of Christ, and
 partakers of his Nature, and betrays, and murders them, and
 yet would be counted holy and true Christians, when it is quite
 contrary; for such are altogether, and wholly against Christ,
 and so are followers of Antichrist, who oppresseth and gainsay-
 eth Christ, and not the Followers of Christ Jesus; and these would
 be accounted according to holy Church, and Members of holy
 Church; But whether they be, let that of God in all consciences
 judge. So away with these, who say they are Christians, and would
 be accounted truely so, but are otherwise.

But the true followers of Christ Jesus, have the Testimony in
 themselves, that they please God, as Enoch had, who walked with
 God in his Generation. Now these false Christians that have the
 name, but are out of the nature of true Christians, they want
 this Testimony, For that of God in their consciences condemns
 them

them for walking contrary to it ; for if they did according to it, they would bring forth fruit unto God, which whilst they disobey the just, by setting contrary to that of God in their consciences, they are far from, but are heaping up unto themselves Wrath, against the Day of Wrath ; so though they take upon them to be true Christians, yet do they want the Testimony of Truth in their Consciences, to assure them that it is so, as the Apostle who was a true follower of Christ, and those who are such have, who said, We know we are of God, and the whole World lies in Wickedness, and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, whereby we know him that is true ; this is true God, and Eternal Life, see *John* 5. 6, 20. Which the true Christians know, and are witnesses of Glory, and Praise, and Honour, be given to the most high God who is holy, and lives for ever : So by what is brought forth may it be known what spirit People are of, or by what spirit they are led and guided ; and so whose Children they are, whether they are the Children of God, or the Children of the Devil ; the Children of God do like him, who is righteous, holy and Just ; and the Children of the Devil, are like their father the Devil, who was a Lyar, and a Murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, and so like him dwell in darkness, and have their habitation there, and not in the Light of the Lord ; For how can they dwell in the Light whilst they are contrary to it, and will not come to it to be guided thereby ? whosoever thou art, that shall read these lines, be serious in the consideration thereof, that it may tend to thy good, and not to thy harm.

Directions for such as live in Error, how they may leave their Error; and know the Truth, which leads out of Error; by which People are made free from sin, which they run into and live in, by following the Spirit of Error.

So 'tis the spirit of error, this spirit of the Devil, which too many are guided by, who will not come to that which shews them their error, that they may be led therefrom, unto God; You will not come to me said Christ to the unbelieving *Jews*, that you might have Life: Now 'tis by following Christ, that error is seen, and the spirit of error shunned, and avoided; so who are in error, and sees your error, to that which lets you see your error, which is the Light Christ Jesus hath enlightened you withall, do I in the fear of God direct your minds, that by taking diligent heed unto it, you may be led therefrom, unto God, who is holy, and lives for ever. So hereby you will know Truth, the Spirit of Truth, which makes free, to free you from your Sins, and Christ you will witness to be the Saviour of your Souls, who saves from Sin, and gives power over Sin, and him who is the Author thereof, viz. the Devil, so you will be no longer in bondage to the Devil, the Author of Sin, nor a Slave to your own corruptions; but may to the praise of the most high God, declare to others what God hath done for your Souls, to your great joy and satisfaction.

So who can receive the report herein given of the Truth, and in other Writings that are given forth therefrom, let them; that we may not complain as *Isaiah* did, who said, Lord, Who hath believed our report, &c. see *Isai.* 53. 1. And consider of the same, and what Christ spake by way of comparison, of that Generation amongst whom he was, before he suffered, see *Mat.* 11. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. &c. The Lord give the Reader an understanding herein, and a Heart to do accordingly.

A few Words to Informers, who make it their Work to inform against their Neighbours, for Meeting together peaceably in the Fear of the Lord, to Worship him as he requires.

Consider what you are doing; do you do the will of God herein? or is it otherwise? viz. do you do it because you hate that which is good, and be at enmity against those whose Works are better than yours are? Consider if it be your minds, and your purposes not to amend, wherein you have need to amend your wayes, and your doings, that you may be what you ought, both in respect to God, and all People, doing to all People wherein you have to do with them, as you would be done by your selves: I say, If the case stands thus with you; whether your Sin will not be the less, if you do nothing to the injury of them, who desire to Worship God according to his holy will, who is a Spirit, and must be Worshipped in the Spirit, and in the Truth; and be towards him, and all People, wherein they shall be concerned with them, as they ought, and as God requires them to be. Certainly if you can refrain your selves from being injurious to such, your Sin will be the less, and you may expect to receive comfort from God in that respect, who is just and holy, and will reward all according to their Works: You may do well to consider the fearfull end of some mentioned in the Scriptures, who made it their business to Inform against the Righteous, who fell into the Snares they had laid for the Righteous, as *Hammon*, who informed against *Mordesai* the Jew, and those who informed against *Daniel*, and take warning thereby, see *Esther* 7. 10. &c. and *Daniel* 6. 24. Surely, Friends, if you shall think to increase your Riches thereby, and to be the more prosperous because thereof; certainly you will find it otherwise, such doing will not tend to your good, but

but harm ; they will bring a Curse upon you, and not a Blessing ; for God will set himself against you, for his People's sakes, who have no helper in the Earth, and plead their Cause with you to your great overthrow, and destruction, except you report of such doings before it be to late, and do no more after the same manner again ; But if you will not take warning, but are resolved to go on in these things, in opposition against God, and his People ; for so may your doings be justly said to be, then will you find the Lords Power stronger then yours, and him greater in might and strength then you all, to subdue you, and lay you low, for rising and lifting your selves up against his Heritage ; and in the mean time, we shall with his help bear what we may suffer by you with patience, and not resist in a way of hostility, but stand still to see the Salvation of God : So remember you were thus far cautioned, and warned to have a care what you do touching things of this nature.

And be it known, that we do not Meet in pretence to Worship God, with an intent to Plot, and contrive Insurrections, for this we detest and abhor ; but peaceably to exhort ; and stir up one anothers pure minds unto that which is good, that the Lord may be glorified by us, and we built upon the Foundation that God hath laid in Sion, which is Elect and Precious, the Rock of Ages, and of Generations, the chief Corner-stone, of which Building is Christ Jesus, which none can know, and witness, but by taking heed to that good thing in them, which did never consent to Sin ; but did ever testify against it, and reprove and condemn for it, which calls unto all to follow peace and holiness with all People, without which, whatever People do profess, they cannot see God.

And therefore you that are evil Workers, to that in you which lets you see the evil of your Wayes, to that take heed, that thereby you may be led therefrom unto God, that your hearts may be purified, and made clean, and you washed from your Sins, and from your filthiness with Christ's Blood, that you may appear spotless before the Throne of God and the Lamb, that his Name may be in your foreheads, and you blessed with seeing

and living in his presence, where there is joy unspeakable and glorious.

Thus have I finished this Work, which, who can receive it let them; and if they receive any profit thereby, let them give Glory to God: Now whether any shall hear, or forbear to hear it, I am satisfied that I have done my Duty herein. To God alone be all Honour and Glory given, even as it is due from me, and all his everywhere, for evermore. Amen.

Worcester City Prison, where I have long suffered Imprisonment for Righteousness sake, sometimes with many of my dear Friends, and sometimes alone; and yet I am not alone, for the mighty God is with me, to uphold me in my Sufferings; who makes things easy, which otherwise would be hard.

The 10th of the 11th
Moneth, 1670.

E. B.

Postscript

Postscript.

W^{ould} God that all that account themselves the Ministers of Christ, were really so ; then would they not be like the false Prophets, mention'd in the Scriptures, as many of them be ; who did preach for Hire, and divine for Money, and sought for their Gain from their Quarters, and prepar'd War against them that put not into their Mouthes, *Micah 3.5.* nor like them that Christ cry'd Wo against, Who loved to be call'd of men Masters, and lov'd the chiefest Places in the Assemblies, &c. *see Mat.23.* Neither ~~would~~ ^{would} they be like the false Teachers, mention'd by the Apostle, *that* taught for filthy Lucre, and through Covetousnes made Merchandise of people, *see 2 Pet.2.3. &c.* and be serious in the consideration thereof. But I would have them like his Ministers whom they take upon them to be, *viz.* The Ministers of Christ Jes^s, who preach'd freely, as they had freely receiv'd, and labour'd

to

to keep the Gospel without charge ; and us'd not their Power, but deny'd themselves of what they might lawfully have done, that they might cut off occasion from them that desir'd it ; and to be Followers of Christ Jesus, taking him for their Example and Pattern in all things ; walking in all Lowliness, and Meekness, and Gentleness, and Patience, as he did : See how the Servant of the Lord is to be qualified, 2 Tim. 2. 24. &c. So when they appear thus, we may believe they are the Ministers of Christ, and have the *Gospel* to preach ; but not before : I would they might own the Grace of God to teach them, that they may be thus. And they that say they are *Christian Magistrates*, I desire they may make it appear, by forbearing to persecute and imprison him in his Members : What ? shall *Christians* persecute *Christians* ? If they that are persecuted are Blameless in the sight of God, for which they suffer, their Persecutors cannot be so, in causing them to suffer : Let this be consider'd, as it ought in the Fear of God, by such. It is said in the *Revelations*, *The Devil shall cast some of you into Prison*, see *Revel. 2. 10*. So it doth concern such to see that they do not the Devil's work herein, lest Iniquity be laid to their Charge for the same ; if it went ill with them

that did not visit Christ in Prison, can it go well (think ye) with them that casts him in? who are guilty herein the Lord forgive them. So the Magistrate, if he would not bear the Sword in vain, must be a Terror to the Evil-doer, and a Praise to them that do Well; for, for this end was he impower'd to Govern by the Lord, and not to do contrary: So, in few words, the Magistrate is to rule and govern as he should be rul'd and govern'd by the Lord God, that he may answer the end of the Lord therein, by doing that which is right in his sight; otherwise, he provokes the Lord against himself, who is the Judge of all the Earth, and will do right in the Caule of the Poor, and in the Cause of the Oppressed, &c. whose Ear is open to hear their Cry; and when the measure of their Sufferings is fill'd up, then doth his own Arm bring Salvation: So it is by continuing in the Faith and Patience that Victory is obtain'd over the Beast, and over his Image, over his Mark, and over the number of his Name. So the Lord keep his Suffering People every where, in believing in him, and patiently to submit unto his holy Will; that thereby we may prevail against the Enemy of our Souls, in our selves, and in others, in all his Besetments, Amen.

The

The Sufferings of the People of God call'd *Quakers in Worcestershire* have been much, by Im-prisonment, and otherwise sometimes, some of them for some years past: And there are some in Prison now, who have suffer'd as Prisoners many years: And some have suffer'd, though not many, much los's of their Goods, and by Imprisonment, since the late Act came forth; in all which we can, and do Rejoyce, it being for the Testimony of our pure Consciences, and not for any Evil we have done; an Account of whose Sufferings may be given more at large hereafter, if God shall make way for the same.

Edward Bourn.

THE END.